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Revealing a new subspecies of *Lucanus sericeus* Didier, 1925 (Coleoptera: Lucanidae) based on morphological comparison

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Keywords:

Coleoptera; Lucanidae; *Lucanus*; *sericeus*; stag beetle; taxonomy; description; new subspecies; mandible; Vietnam.

Abstract. – This paper reports a new subspecies of *Lucanus sericeus* Didier, 1925, *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., collected from Ha Giang Province, Vietnam.

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Introduction

Lucanus Scopoli, 1763 represents the type genus of the family Lucanidae Latreille, 1804. Species of this genus occur primarily throughout Eurasia, with a limited number recorded in North America and North Africa (Fujita, 2010; Yi, 2023). Currently, 22 *Lucanus* taxa are documented in Vietnam, including the recently described *L. ludivinae flavipes* Xin, He, Zhong & Qi, 2024 from northern Vietnam, and *L. collardi* Sato, Ngoc, & Zilioli, 2024 reported from Vietnam and Laos (Xin *et al.*, 2024; Sato *et al.*, 2024). *Lucanus sericeus* Didier, 1925 comprises three recognized subspecies: *L. s. sericeus* Didier, 1925 distributed in northern Vietnam (type locality: Tonkin, northern Vietnam); *L. s. ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003 endemic to northeastern Laos (type locality: Phu Pan Mountain, Xam Neua District, Houaphanh Province, Laos); and *L. s. teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003 ranging through northwestern Thailand and western Yunnan, China (type locality: Fang District, Chiang Mai Province, Thailand) (Didier, 1925; Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003; Fujita, 2010; Huang & Chen, 2017; Yi, 2023). Morphological affinities exist between *L. sericeus* and *L. nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, which is distributed in Kachin State, Myanmar and northwestern Yunnan Province, China (type locality: Putao District, Kachin State, Myanmar) (Zhan *et al.*, 2022). Huang & Huang (2017) argued that subspecific division of *L. sericeus* is unnecessary due to transitional characters in specimens from certain regions preventing classification, and the absence of genital differences. However, we contend that mandibular distinctions in non-transitional areas are unique and relatively stable. Transitional morphological expressions in contact zones between closely related species represent a normal biological phenomenon. Notably, *L. nangsarae* also exhibits minimal genital differences from *L. sericeus* (Zhan et al., 2022; the present study). Therefore, we maintain that *L. sericeus* can still be divided into subspecies, and *L. nangsarae* may potentially be reclassified as its subspecies —though this falls beyond the scope of the present study.

In this study, we examined numerous *Lucanus sericeus* specimens from Ha Giang Province, Vietnam, and compared them with specimens of other subspecies from various localities. The mandibles of the Ha Giang specimens exhibit distinctive and consistently stable morphology across all individuals, supporting the recognition of a new taxon: *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**.

Material and methods

Specimen imaging employed an integrated macro-photography system. Full-body images were captured using a Nikon D810 DSLR coupled with a Laowa FF 100 mm F2.8 CA-Dreamer Macro 2X lens. An automated focus-stacking rail (WeMacro system) synchronized with a custom annular LED array (Mioron2835 24V high-CRI modules) ensured uniform illumination and extended depth of field. Multi-focus composites were processed in Helicon Focus 8.0.4 Pro, with chromatic calibration via Datacolor Spyder Checkr Photo and tonal optimization in Adobe Lightroom. Genitalia structures were documented at 20-200× magnification using a Keyence VHX-5000 digital microscope with coaxial illumination and VH-Z20R motorized zoom lens. Final post-processing included perspective correction and multi-frame alignment in Adobe Photoshop 2023 to maintain scientific fidelity and visual consistency.

The morphological terminology mainly refers to Huang & Chen (2010, 2013, 2017).

Abbreviations for collections

CCZB: personal collection of Cheng-Zhi Bian, Beijing, China;
CFYX: personal collection of Fei-Yi Xin, Sichuan, China;

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CHH: personal collection of Hao He, Yunnan, China;
CKYL: personal collection of Kun-Yi Li, Shandong, China;
CXTZ: personal collection of Xiao-Tian Zhong, Sichuan, China;
CYCX: personal collection of Yu-Can Xie, Zhejiang, China;
CYLL: personal collection of Yue-Long Li, Beijing, China;
CZHQ: personal collection of Zhi-Hao Qi, Fujian, China;
NACRC: National Animal Collection Resource Center, Beijing, China.

A morphologically representative male specimen was designated as the holotype, alongside a female paratype, and both were deposited in the public repository NACRC, under accession codes.

Measurement criteria (mm)

- **Body length**: length between the apex of the mandible to the elytral apex along the midline;
- **Elytral length**: length between the basal border and the apex of the elytra along the suture;
- **Elytral width**: the widest part of the elytra;
- **Head length**: length between the tip of the clypeus and the posterior margin of the occiput along the midline;
- **Head width**: the widest part of the head;
- **Mandible length**: length from the apex of the mandible to its base at the anterior margin of the head;
- **Pronotal length**: length of the pronotum along the midline;
- **Pronotal width**: the widest part of the pronotum.

Material examined for comparison

– ***Lucanus sericeus sericeus*** Didier, 1925

1 ♂ (CFYX) & **2** ♂ (CXTZ), Vietnam, Yen Bai Province, Mu Cang Chai County, V.2023, local collector leg.

– ***L. s. ohbayashii*** Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003

1 ♂ (CXTZ), Laos, Xieng Khouang Province, Phu Pham Mountain, alt. 2000 m, VI.2020, local collector leg.

– ***L. s. teshii*** Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003

1 ♂ (CXTZ), China, Yunnan Province, Baoshan City, Longling County, Hei Mountain, alt. 1800 m, VII.2021, local collector leg.;
2 ♂ (CXTZ), China, Yunnan Province, Baoshan City, Tengchong City, Datang Village, alt. 1800–2200 m, 2022–2023, local collector leg.

– ***L. nangsarae*** Nagai, 2000

3 ♂ (CXTZ), Myanmar, Kachin State, Putao County, Muk Ga Village, alt. 1600–2000 m, VI.2022, Mingxing Zhao leg.

Results

Genus ***Lucanus*** Scopoli, 1763

Lucanus sericeus Didier, 1925
Lucanus sericeus Didier, 1925: 219-220.

Lucanus sericeus xieyucani Xin, Zhong & Qi **ssp**. **nov**.

(Fig. 1A, D; 3C; 4; 5A, D; 6A, D; 7A, D; 8A, D; 9A–B, G–H; 10; 11)
ZooBank: https://zoobank.org/EA47DE0C-BF4D-4373-BDC1-339D119E7D06

Holotype, ♂ (NACRC: IOZ (E) 224801), Vietnam, Ha Giang Province, Hoang Su Phi County, Nam Ty Commune, alt. 1800, V.2025, local collector leg.

Paratypes (**78** ♂, **20** ♀)

- **61** ♂, **17** ♀ (**18** ♂ CHH, **15** ♂ CXTZ, **10** ♂ CYLL, **10** ♂ CYCX, **4** ♂ CFYX, **3** ♂ CZHQ, **2** ♂ CKYL; **1** ♀ NACRC: IOZ (E) 224802, **12** ♀ CXTZ, **2** ♀ CFYX, **1** ♀ CYCX, **1** ♀ CHH), same data as holotype, but alt. 1800-1900 m, V-VII.2025;
- **6** ♂ (CCZB), Vietnam, Ha Giang Province, Xin Man County, Kiou Leou Ti Mountain, alt. 1800, V.2025, Van Ngoc Dang leg.;
- **10** ♂, **3** ♀ (CCZB), Vietnam, Ha Giang Province, Vi Xuyen County, Thuong Son Commune, alt. 1800, V.2025, Van Ngoc Dang leg.

Diagnosis. – This new subspecies resembles the three other known subspecies of *Lucanus sericeus* Didier, 1925 and *L. nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, but is distinguished by its distinctive mandibular characters (Fig. 3): relatively curved; the major tooth posterior to the apical fork posteriorly positioned; the basal tooth situated more anteriorly; no small teeth occur between the major tooth and the basal tooth; only 1-2 small teeth occur between the major tooth and the apical fork. Furthermore, the females of *L. sericeus* subspecies and *L. nangsarae* cannot be reliably distinguished from *L. fryi* Boileau, 1911 by external characters. However, dissection of the female genitalia in the new subspecies reveals that its L-shaped spermatheca with a distinctly enlarged terminus provides a clear diagnostic character separating *L. sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**. from *L. fryi*.

Description of the holotype (Fig. 1A, D; 3C; 5A; 6A; 7A; 8A; 9A, G)

Dimensions (mm)
Body length (70.2)
Length of particular body parts:
- head (10.0)
- mandible (21.8)
- pronotum (9.0)
- elytra (28.9).

Width:
- head (19.8)
- pronotum (18.2)
- elytra (20.9).

Habitus (Fig. 1A, D). – Whole body black with significant copper luster. Dorsal surface of body covered dense yellow pubescence, pubescence on the mandible and head sparse; ventral surface of body with longer, denser pubescence.

Head. – Transverse. Anterior ridge raised obviously, curved basally. Lateral ridges narrowed inwards in the front half and strongly extended in posterior half, forming prominent rounded angles at lateral posterior corners. Canthus robust, dividing about 1/3 of the eye. Clypeolabrum triangular, sharp forward. Mandible (Fig. 3C) about 2.0 times longer than head, incurved; apical fork with upper tooth almost as long as lower one, 2 small teeth near the apical fork; a long major inner tooth occur posterior to the small teeth; basal tooth blunt, brawny and short, placed at on basal 1/6 of the mandible; inner margin between the major tooth and the basal tooth smooth without small teeth; a protrusion near the base in ventral view. Antennal club with 4 antennomeres, antennomere VII slender and sharply pointed apically, antennomeres VIII-IX lamellate, antennomeres X sub-triangular.

Pronotum. – Transverse, 1.7 times wider than long, widest at basal third. Lateral angles obtusely acute.

Scutellum. – Subtriangular, punctate, 1.5 times wider than long.

Legs. – Protibia with 3-4 blunt protuberances along outer margin; apex bifurcate with branches blunt at tip, base of apex branches strongly extend. Mesotibia and metatibia with 3-5 oblique spines at outer margin besides terminal spines.

Elytra. – Elongate, 1.5 times longer than wide, the anterior margin of elytra wider than pronotum.

Abdomen and aedeagus. – Ventral plate of the abdominal segment IX (Fig. 5A) without a membranous stripe. Aedeagus (Fig. 6A; 7A; 8A) in dorsal view about 2.2 times longer than wide. Basal piece elongated, nearly 1.7 times longer than parameres in dorsal view, with pair of membranous dorsal plates; ventral plate at apical end of basal piece membranous. Paramere with small basal process, apex of paramere upcurved. Penis shorter and slightly narrower than paramere in ventral view. Flagellum (Fig. 9A, G) about 1.3 times longer than aedeagus, tapers apically from base, becoming markedly attenuated at about basal one-third, enlarged apically.

Male paratypes

Body length 38.5-74.1 mm.
The mandible-to-head ratio decreases progressively with increasing body size, and mandibular curvature exhibits a proportional reduction with decreasing body dimensions, while posterior expansion of the head reduces concomitantly similarly (Fig. 4). Mandibles with 0-2 small teeth near the apical fork (Fig. 4). Individual large-sized males appear more slender in mandible (Fig. 4A). Mandible thinnest in small-sized males, with reduced major teeth and complete absence of small teeth in small-sized males (Fig. 4C).

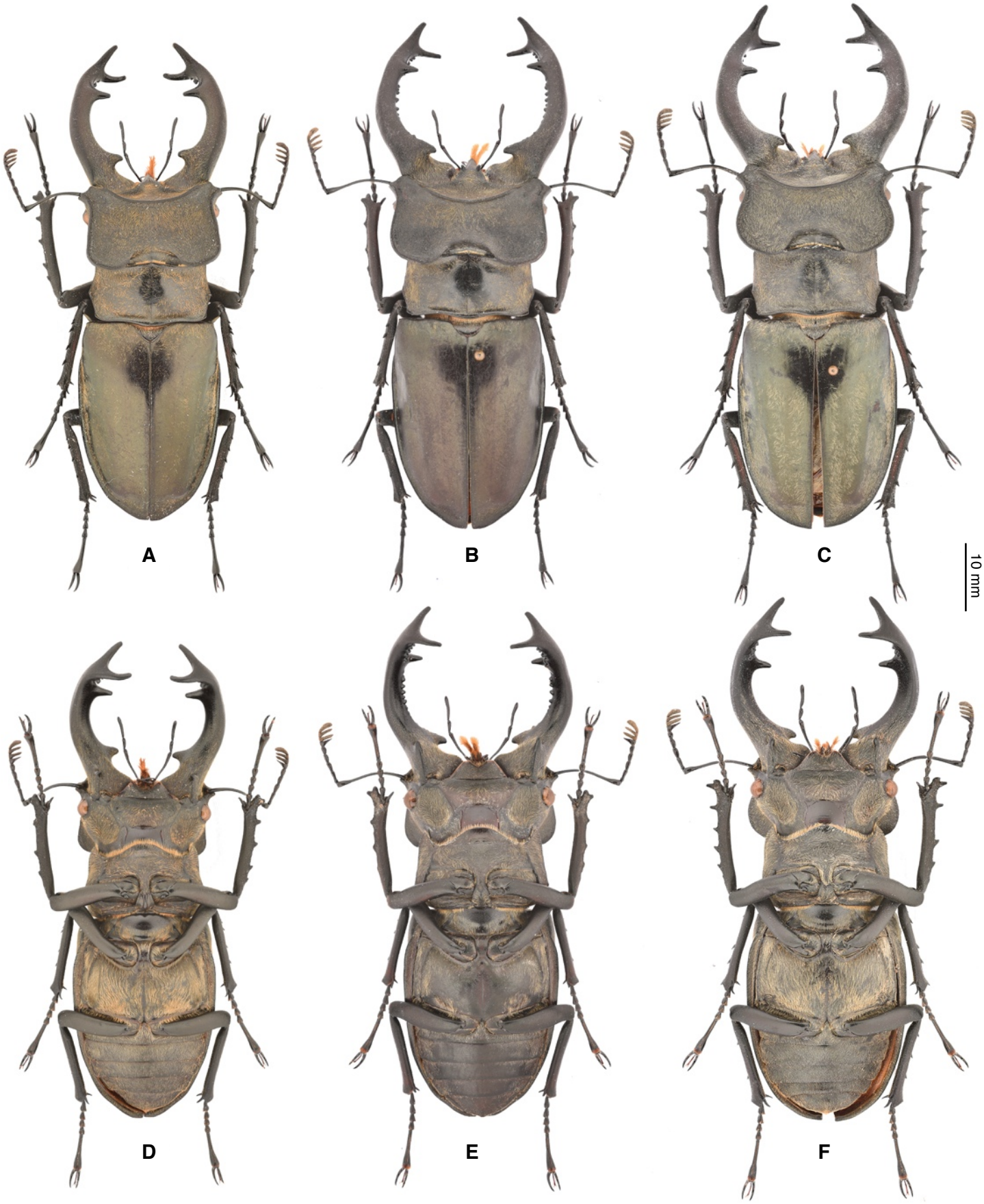

Fig. **1**. Males habitus of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies and *Lucanus nangsarae* Nagai, 2000.

A, **D**. *L. sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., holotype, large-sized, 70.2 mm, Ha Giang, Vietnam. **B**, **E**. *L. s. teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, large-sized, 75.2 mm, Yunnan, China. **C**, **F**. *L. nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, large-sized, 77.1 mm, Kachin, Myanmar. **A - C**. Dorsal view. **D - F**. Ventral view.

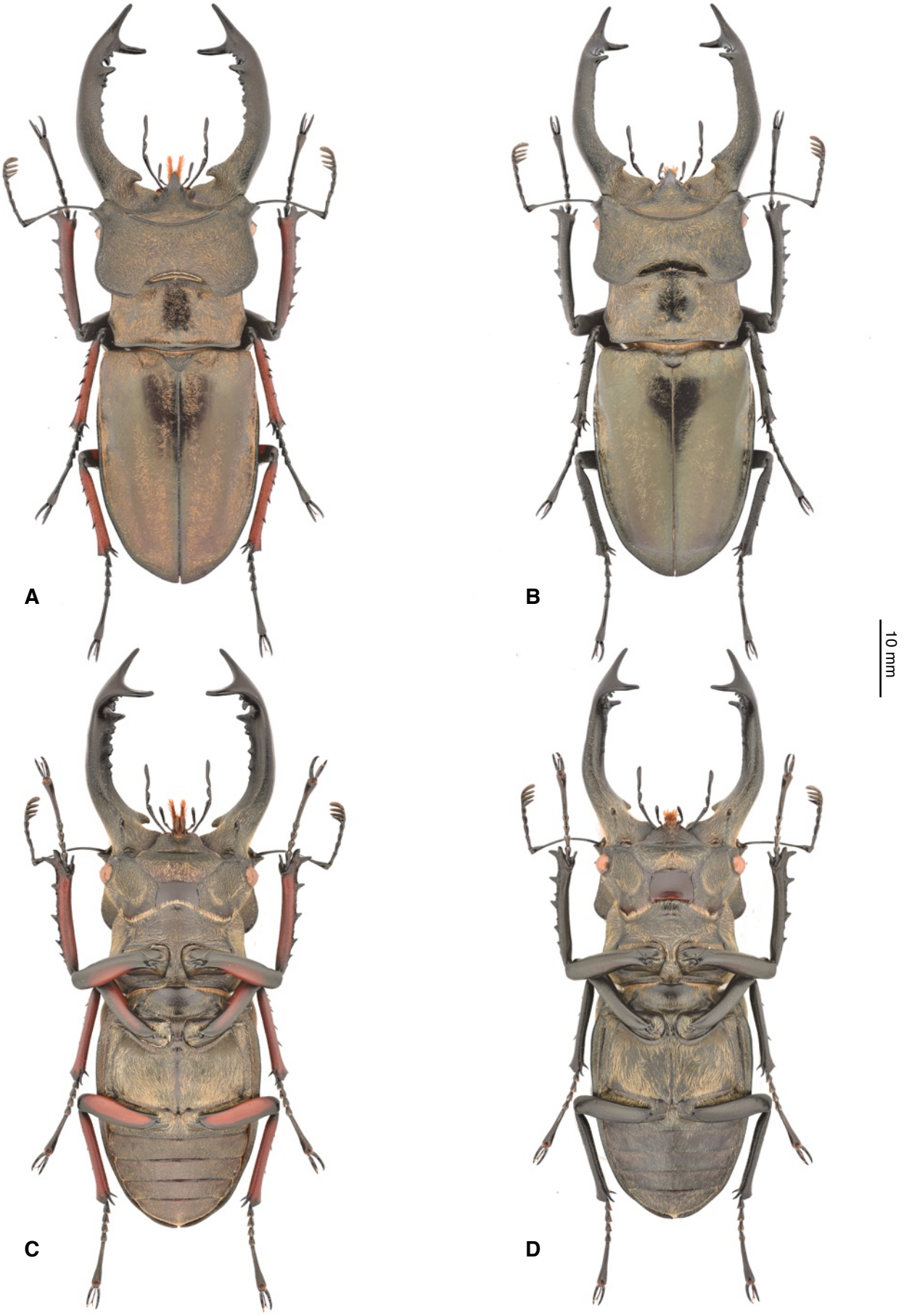

Fig. **2**. Males habitus of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies.

A, **C**. *L*. *s*. *sericeus* Didier, 1925, Large-sized, 74.9 mm, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **B**, **D**. *L*. *s*. *ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Large-sized, 73.9 mm, Xieng Khouang, Laos. **A**-**B**. Dorsal view. **C**-**D**. Ventral view.

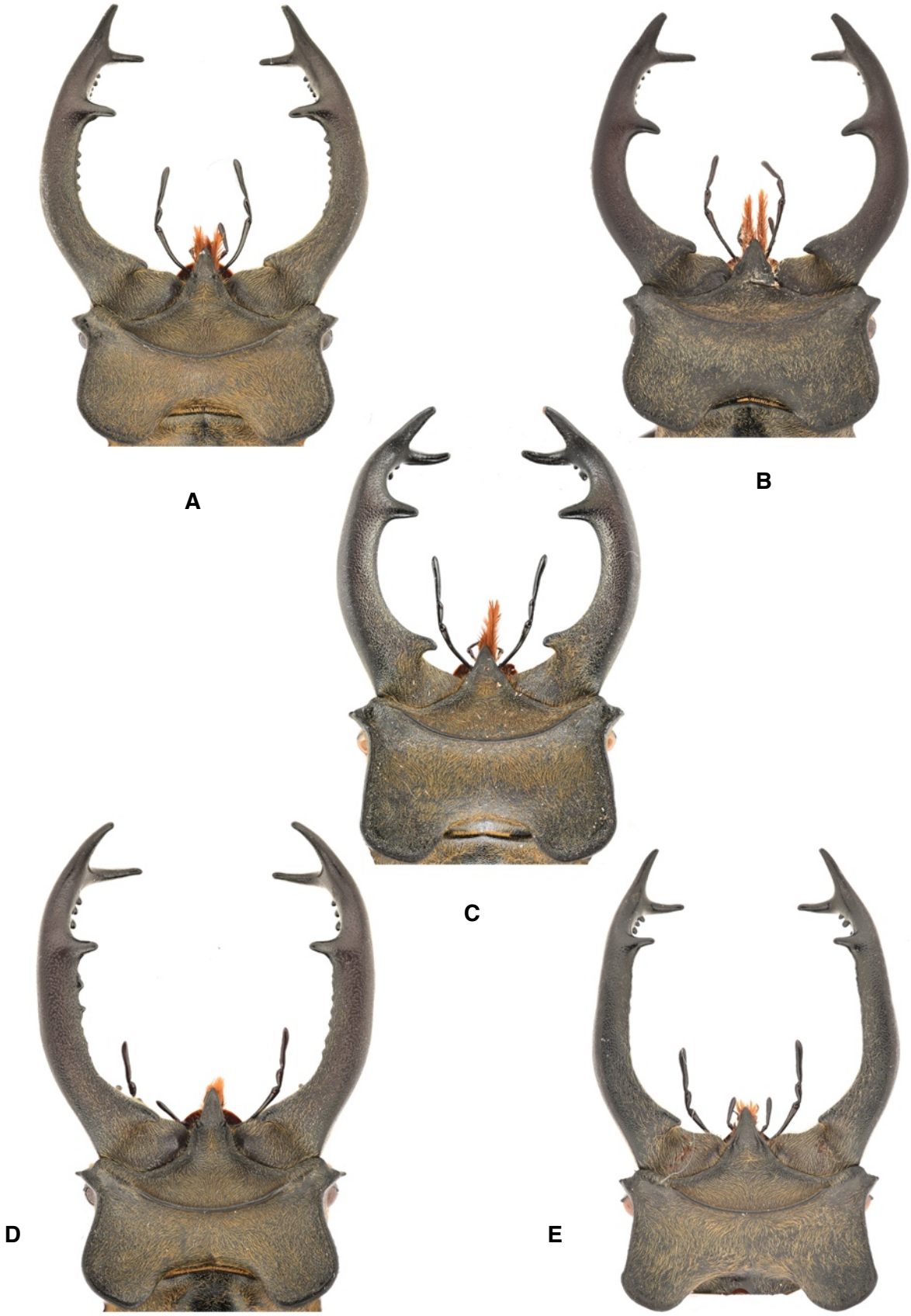

Fig. **3**. Large-sized male heads of *Lucanus* species in dorsal view.

A. *L*. *sericeus teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Yunnan, China. **B**. *L*. *nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, Kachin, Myanmar. **C**. *L*. *s*. *xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., Ha Giang, Vietnam. **D**. *L*. *s*. *sericeus* Didier, 1925, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **E**. *L*. *s*. *ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Xieng Khouang, Laos.

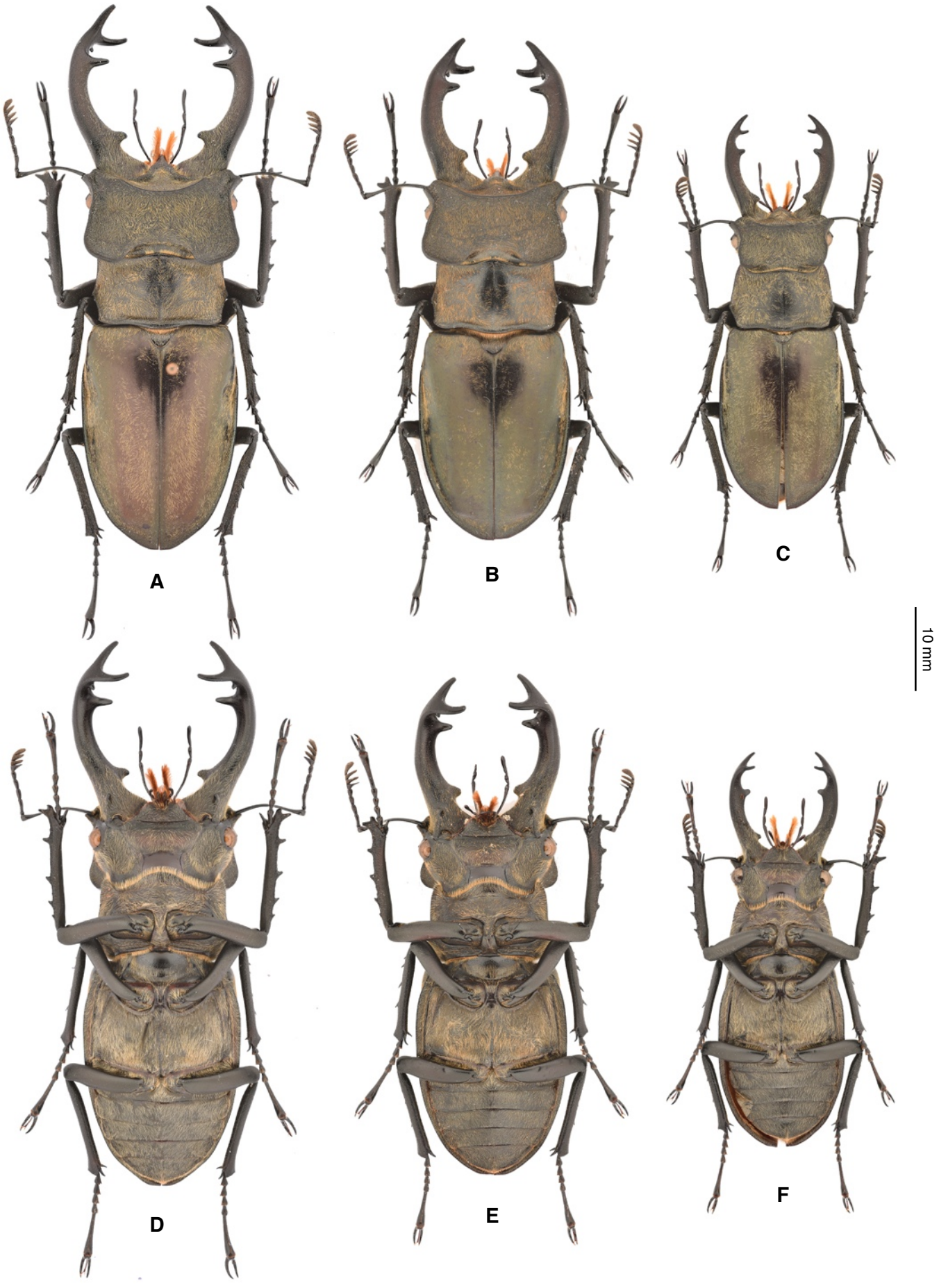

Fig. **4**. Male paratypes of *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**.
A, **D**. Large-sized (65.4 mm). **B**, **E**. Mid-sized (60.0 mm). **C**, **F**. Small-sized (47.3 mm). **A-C**. Dorsal view. **D-F**. Ventral view.

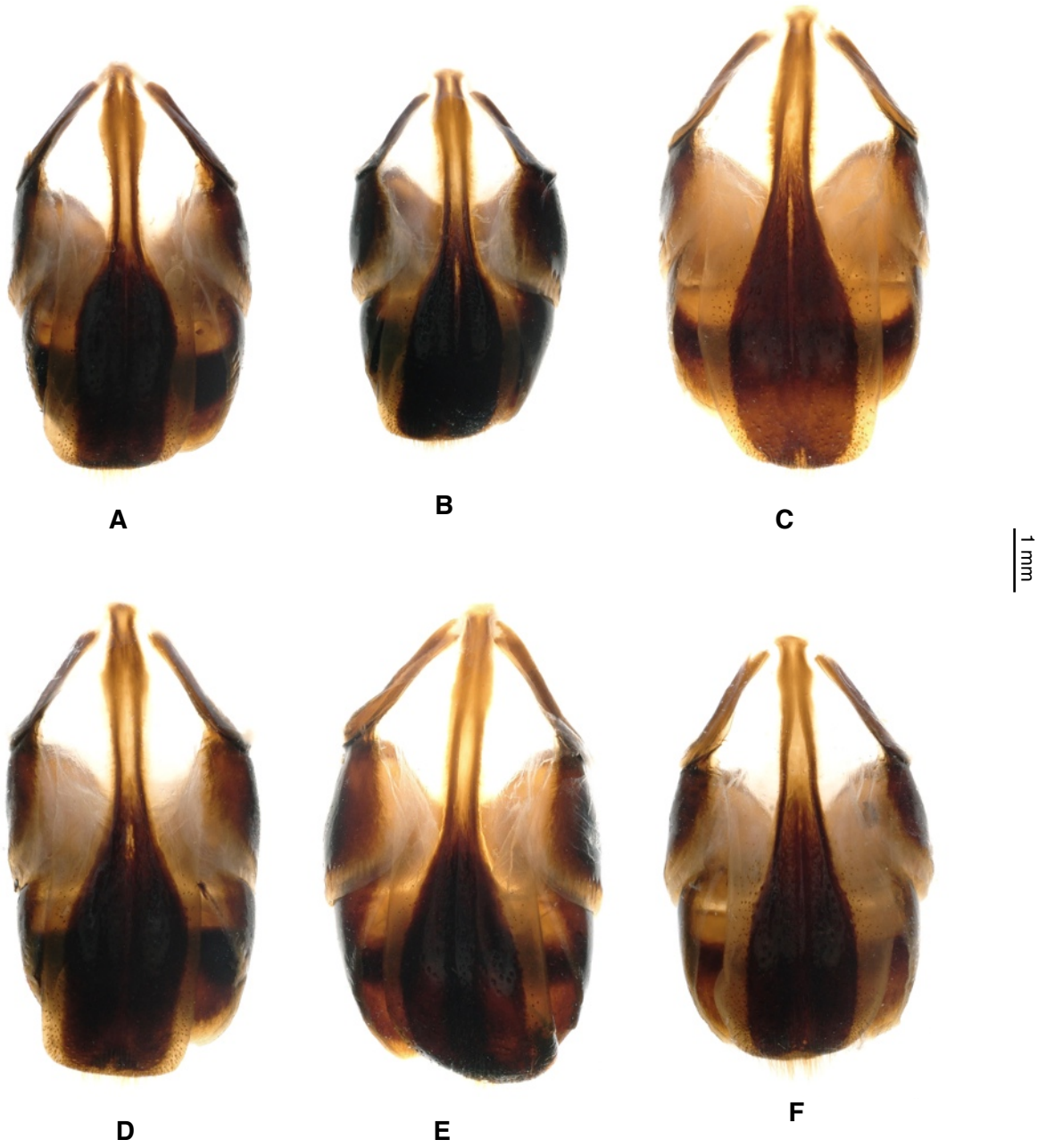

Fig. **5**. Male abdominal segment IX of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies and *Lucanus nangsarae* Nagai, 2000 in ventral view.

A, **D**. *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., Ha Giang, Vietnam. **B**. *L*. *s*. *sericeus* Didier, 1925, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **C**. *L*. *s*. *teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Yunnan, China. **E**. *L*. *nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, Kachin, Myanmar. **F**. *L*. *s*. *ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Xieng Khouang, Laos.

Female paratypes

Body length 30.9-39.2 mm.

Habitus (Fig. 10). – Whole body black with significant luster. Dorsal surface of head, margins of pronotum, and elytra covered sparse yellow pubescence, pubescence on the base of mandible relatively longer and denser; ventral surface of body with longer, denser pubescence.

Head. – Whole head covered with dense large punctures. Canthus long and wide with M-shaped outer margin. Clypeolabrum triangular, sharp forward. Mandible short, serrate, and slightly asymmetrical with 2 large teeth. Antennal club with 4 antennomeres, antennomere VII slender and sharply pointed apically, antennomeres VIII-IX lamellate, antennomeres X sub-triangular.

Pronotum. – transverse, 1.8 times wider than long, widest at basal third. Lateral angles sharp.

Scutellum. – subtriangular, punctate, 1.9 times wider than long.

Legs. – Protibia with 3-4 blunt protuberances along outer margin; apex bifurcate with branches blunt at tip, base of apex branches strongly extend. Mesotibia with 3-5 oblique spines at outer margin and metatibia with 2 oblique spines at outer margin besides terminal spines.

Elytra. – Elongate, 1.3 times longer than wide, the anterior margin of elytra wider than pronotum.

Genitalia. – Hemisternite (Fig. 11) with hyperbolic outer margins, apical margin rounded with setae. Spermathecal duct relatively long. Spermatheca sclerotic, L-shaped with a distinctly enlarged terminus. Spermathecal duct fusiform and membranous.

Etymology. – The new subspecies is named after Mr. Yu-Can Xie (Zhejiang, China), who provided the type specimens.

Distribution. – Vietnam (Ha Giang).

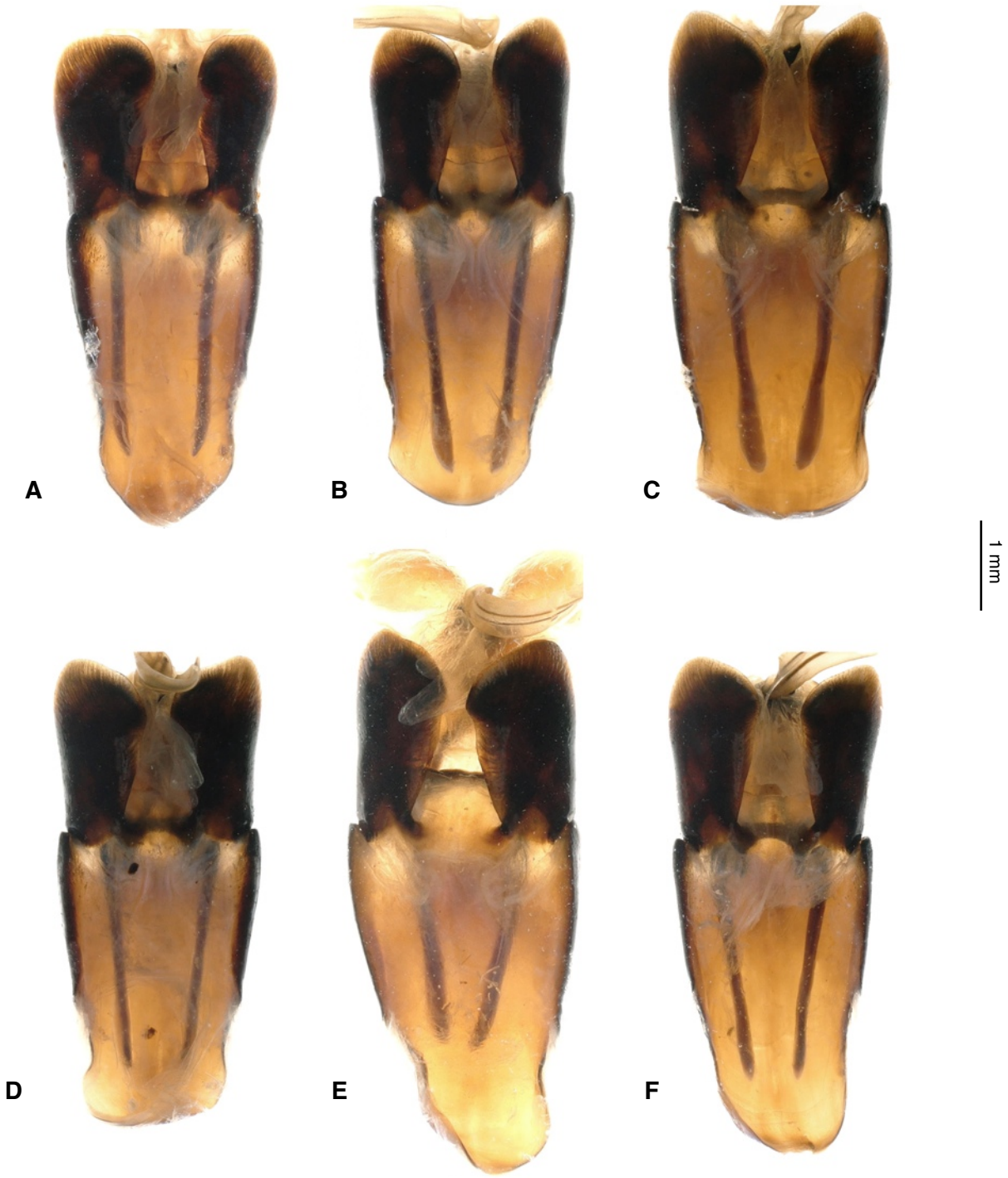

Fig. **6**. Aedeagus of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies and *Lucanus nangsarae* Nagai, 2000 in dorsal view.

A, **D**. *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., Ha Giang, Vietnam. **B**. *L*. *s*. *sericeus* Didier, 1925, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **C**. *L*. *s*. *teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Yunnan, China. **E**. *L*. *nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, Kachin, Myanmar. **F**. *L*. *s*. *ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Xieng Khouang, Laos.

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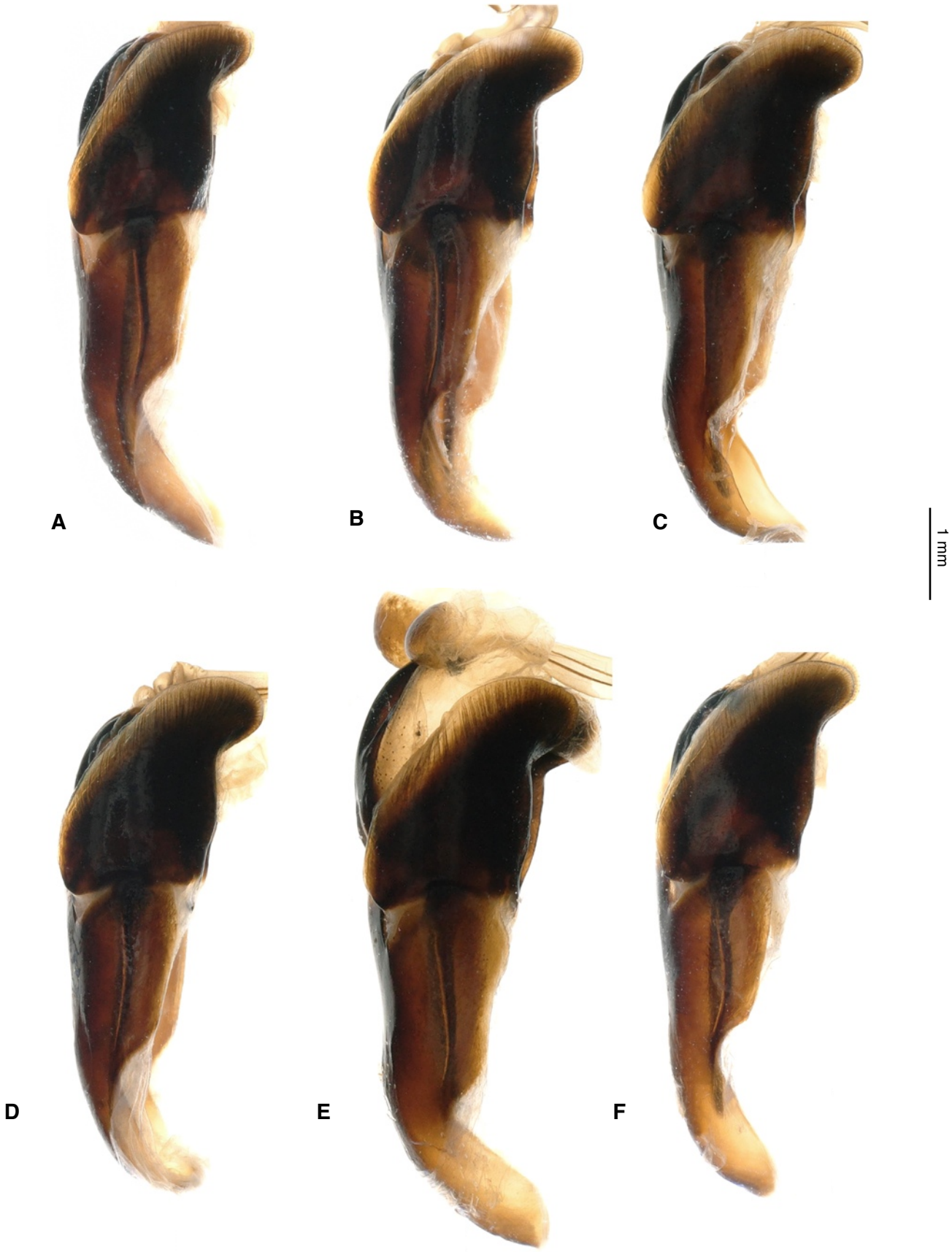

Fig. **7**. Aedeagus of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies and *Lucanus nangsarae* Nagai, 2000 in lateral view.

A, **D**. *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., Ha Giang, Vietnam. **B**. *L. s. sericeus* Didier, 1925, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **C**. *L. s. teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Yunnan, China. **E**. *L. nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, Kachin, Myanmar. **F**. *L. s. ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Xieng Khouang, Laos.

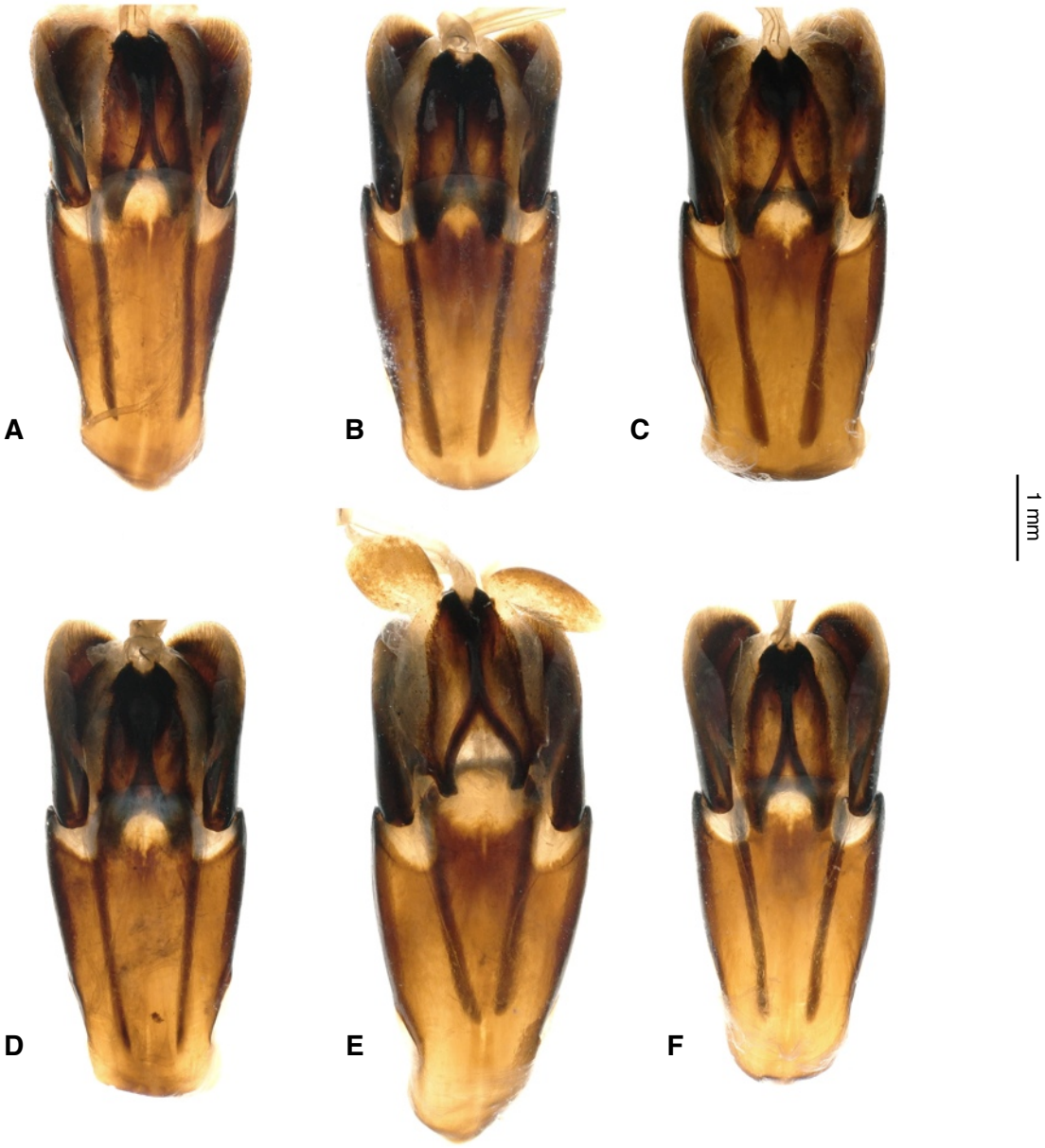

Fig. **8**. Aedeagus of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies and *Lucanus nangsarae* Nagai, 2000 in ventral view.

A, **D**. *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., Ha Giang, Vietnam. **B**. *L. s. sericeus* Didier, 1925, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **C**. *L. s. teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Yunnan, China. **E**. *L. nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, Kachin, Myanmar. **F**. *L. s. ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Xieng Khouang, Laos.

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Article proofreading. – FYX, XTZ & ZHQ
Bibliographic work. – FYX, XTZ & ZHQ
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Author of the figures. – FYX, ZHQ & XTZ

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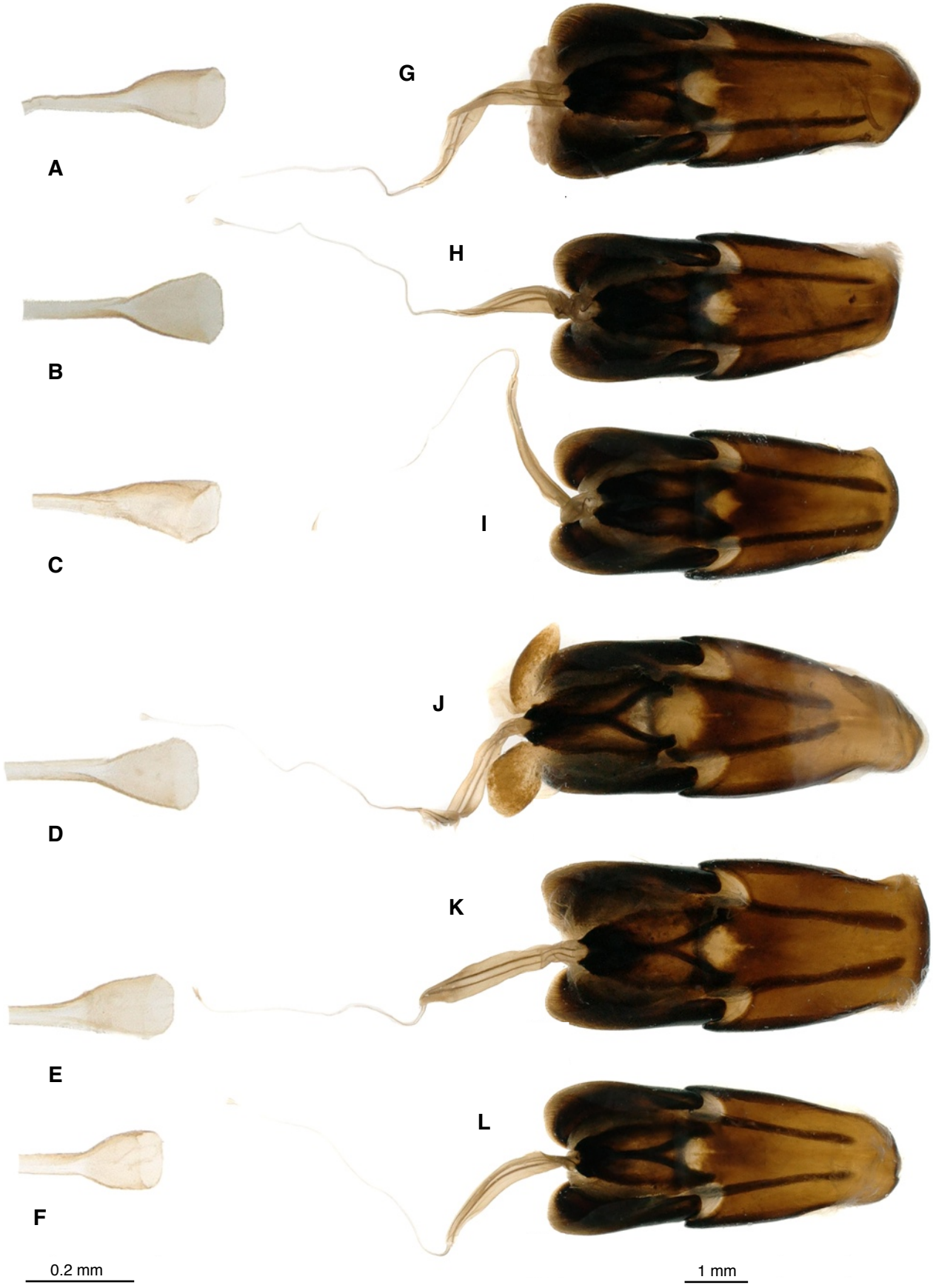

Fig. **9**. Apex of flagellum and integral aedeagus of *Lucanus sericeus* subspecies and *Lucanus nangsarae* Nagai, 2000 in ventral view.

A-**B, G**-**H**. *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., Ha Giang, Vietnam. **C**, **I**. *L*. *s*. *sericeus* Didier, 1925, Yen Bai, Vietnam. **D**, **J**. *L*. *nangsarae* Nagai, 2000, Kachin, Myanmar. **E**, **K**. *L*. *s*. *teshii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Yunnan, China. **F**, **L**. *L*. *s*. *ohbayashii* Nagai & Tsukamoto, 2003, Xieng Khouang, Laos.

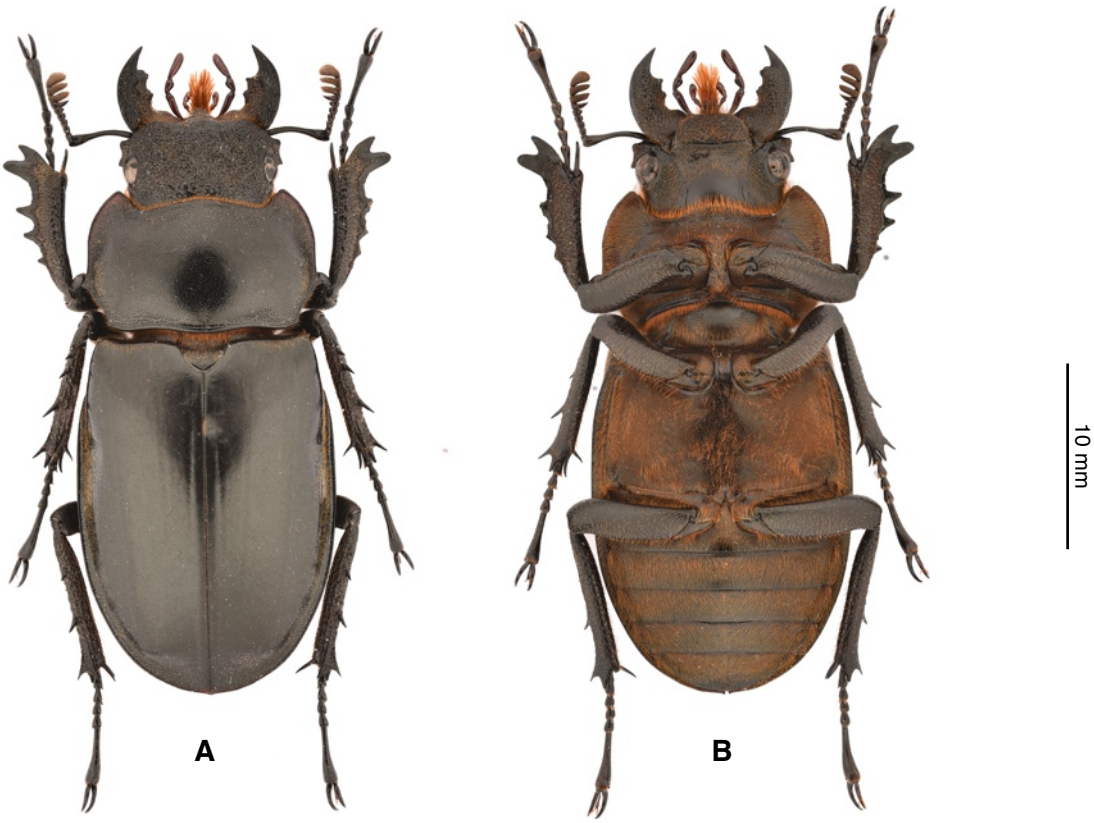

Fig. **10**. Female paratype of *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**.
A. Dorsal view. **B**. Ventral view.

Fig. **11**. Female genitalia of *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**. in ventral view.
A-**B**. Paratype, Ha Giang, Vietnam.

Résumé

Xin F.-Y., Zhong X.-T. & Qi Z.-H., 2025. – Description d'une nouvelle sous-espèce de *Lucanus sericeus* Didier, 1925 basée sur des comparaisons morphologiques (Coleoptera : Lucanidae). *Faunitaxys*, 13(53): 1 – 13.

Cet article rapporte une nouvelle sous-espèce de *Lucanus sericeus* Didier, 1925, *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**., collectée dans la province de Ha Giang au Vietnam.

Mots-clés. – Coleoptera, Lucanidae, *Lucanus*, lucane cerf-volant, taxonomie, description, nouvelle sous-espèce, mandibule, Vietnam.

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SOMMAIRE

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Illustration de la couverture :

Natural habitat of *Lucanus sericeus xieyucani* **ssp**. **nov**. in Ha Giang, Vietnam.

Crédits:

Fei-Yi Xin: Fig. 1-11 & couverture.
Zhi-Hao Qi: Fig. 5-9, 11.

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